

OREGON FIELD CROPS

Hay production in 2002 was a record of 3.4 million tons. Prices were relatively high, though not as high as in 2001.

The highest wheat prices since 1996 were preceded by higher planted acres. Another year of dry weather brought low top soil moisture and a cumulative negative effect on the subsoil. Harvested acres were lower and yields were similar to 2001, but low historically. The higher wheat prices and lower prices for other crops such as grass seed resulted in an increase in acres seeded to wheat in the Willamette Valley. The north central counties yielded averages of 20 bushels per acre for spring wheat and 26 bushels per acre for winter.

Potato yields, acreage and sales all rebounded from last year but none of those matched 2000, a record production year. Klamath County participated in this rebound with increases in yields and acreage. Malheur acreage continued to decline as it has the past few years.

Peppermint production continued its decline to 2.11 million pounds in 2002, down three percent from the 2001 production. This rather steady decline in production, mostly the result of lower prices, began in 1995 when production was 3.75 million pounds. Some operators found it more profitable to harvest mint for tea leaves rather than for oil.

Value of production declined for grass seed. Ryegrass harvested acres decreased and fescue prices declined.

Value of production, percent of total, Oregon, 2002

